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## Korea, Republic of

### Product Brief

## Condiments, Sauces and Salad Dressings

2005

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**Report Highlights:**

The total size of the Korean imported condiment and salad dressing market is expected to grow 12 percent in 2005 to an estimated \$100.5 million. Condiments, such as barbeque sauce, hot sauce, fish sauce, salad dressings, steak sauce and Worcestershire sauce are showing the greatest signs of growth with an estimated eleven percent increase since 2004. Koreans are looking for high quality products with unique flavors that are not only convenient, but comes in a package size proportional to their needs.

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Seoul ATO [KS2]  
[KS]

**SECTION I. MARKET OVERVIEW**

The total size of the Korean imported condiment and salad dressing market is expected to grow twelve percent in 2005 to an estimated \$100.5 million.

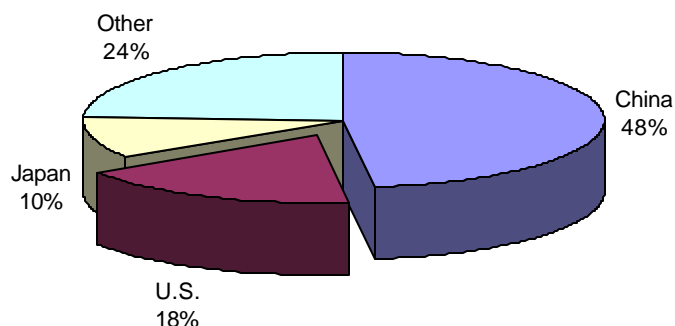
Condiments such as BBQ sauce, hot sauce, fish sauce, salad dressings, steak sauce, and Worcestershire sauce are showing the greatest signs of growth with an estimated eleven percent increase since 2004. This increase is most likely the result of a greater consumer demand for diversity among sauces. However, imported condiments such as pickles (cucumbers/gherkins), relish and olives are on a decreasing trend. Consumers demanding products that are healthier and have a Korean flavor is the cause of this downward trend.

**Table 1. Total Imports 2004-2005**  
Unit: US \$1000

	<b>2004 Total Imports</b>	<b>2004 Imports from the U.S.</b>	<b>2005<sup>1</sup> Total Imports</b>	<b>2005<sup>1</sup> Imports from the U.S.</b>	<b>Total Percent Change</b>	<b>U.S. Percent Change</b>
Sauces	63,654	8510	72,577	9490	12%	10%
Salt & Pepper	10,912	427	13,896	529	21%	19%
Pickles & Olives	11,023	5727	10,730	5206	-3%	-9%
Syrups & Honey	3422	1053	3329	680	-3%	-35%
Total	89,011	15,717	100,532	15,905	12%	1%

Note: 1. 2005 is an estimate.

Koreans are looking for products that can be differentiated from others. An exporter interested in the Korean market should research Korean taste preferences and consider adjusting the quality, taste and/or functionality of the product to suit their market better. Korean consumers are looking for a high quality product with a unique flavor that is not only convenient, but a product that comes in a package size proportional to their needs. With consumers following the "well-being" trend in Korea, products that provide a health benefit are preferred.

**Table 2. 2004 Market Share of Imported Condiments and Salad Dressings****Table 3. Advantages and Challenges for United States**

Advantages	Challenges
The U.S. has a good reputation for producing high quality condiment products.	Korean consumers are more likely to purchase domestic brands.
Korean consumers are familiar with and have an understanding of U.S. products.	Imported products may be overlooked at the retail level because of their packaging size and appearance.
The U.S. produces a large variety of sauces.	Many imported condiments in the market do not cater to local tastes.
There is an increasing demand for condiments in the Korean market.	Salad dressings are new to the retail sector and consumers unaware of the product diversity available to them.
There is a relatively low tariff rate of 8 percent on sauces and salad dressings.	Inspection procedures can be difficult as food additive restrictions are different than those in the United States.

The retail and HRI sectors in the Korean market are not in direct competition for the same imports, as both sectors have established different condiments and salad dressings to import. Korean consumers in the retail sector are looking for condiments depicting new and trendy flavors, purchasing products based on quality and functionality. Condiments that are new to market are preferred as Korean consumers are eager to try them out.

While consumers in the HRI sector are following the retail sector trends, many of the condiments are being made domestically in Korea with fresh ingredients. The purchase of condiments for the HRI sector is very sensitive to price. With the continual increase in the number of franchises and institutional restaurants in Korea, the condiment and salad dressing market is expected to grow. The growth of franchise restaurants is resulting in increased demand for products with new tastes, stable pricing, volume capability, added value, and customized food service specifications, characteristics where U.S. products are competitive.

## SECTION II. MARKET SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

### 1. Entry Strategy

The current best strategy to enter the condiment sector of the retail market is to contact and work with an established importer as few retailers import directly. This may change in the future, as large retailers continue to seek direct imports.

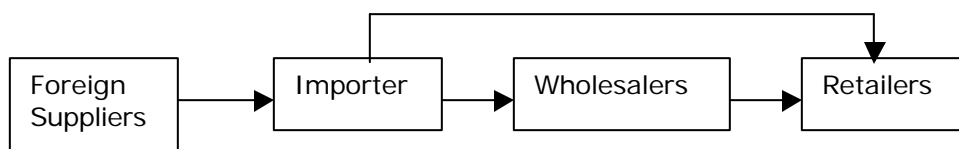
In the HRI market, the current best strategy is to work with an established importer who has an effective sales/marketing and distribution network focused on target customers. An exporter may also develop products, including making changes to existing recipes and specifications, that meet consumer tastes and trends. It is important to remember to maintain price competitiveness by trading in a large volume and/or adding value to the product. Another market strategy for the HRI sector is to provide quick responses to changes in the supply and demand situation in the market.

Established importers should be able to provide market intelligence, up-to-date information, guidance on business practices and trade related regulations, sales contacts with existing and potential buyers, and market development expertise.

The Korean government maintains very strict regulations on food imports and requires various documents before import clearance. Therefore, the exporter must provide the importer with the necessary information to be submitted to the Korean government. An importer will be able to assist in this process.

Korean retailers rarely import food products directly, including condiments. Buying food products from importers and/or wholesalers is the norm.

**Table 4. Distribution Supply Channel**



### 2. Market Size, Structure and Trends

The domestic food industry in Korea offers major competition for U.S. exporters, producing a variety of quality products and an extensive processing industry. Since many Koreans have been continually exposed to these domestic products, there is a distinct marketing advantage over imported products. The price of these domestic products tend to retail for less than imports, while the quality is not as high as those that are imported. Despite being more familiar with domestic products, Korean consumers seem to prefer the higher quality of imports.

For many Korean consumers, the packaging makes the product. A product, whether domestic or imported, with an attractive package will sell better at the retail level than a product that is poorly packaged. Considerations to account for when choosing packaging for the Korean market are appearance and size.

The appearance of the product is as important as the product itself. Many Korean consumers are willing to purchase products in glass containers with attractive shapes and labels, at a

higher cost. These products are believed to have a better shelf life as well as a higher quality.

The size of packaging for the Korean consumer is decreasing. As more Korean families grow smaller and have fewer children, the quantities and package sizes purchased grow smaller as well. Most Koreans are purchasing food products for 2-3 people. These consumers are purchasing products of 250-375 milliliters or grams.

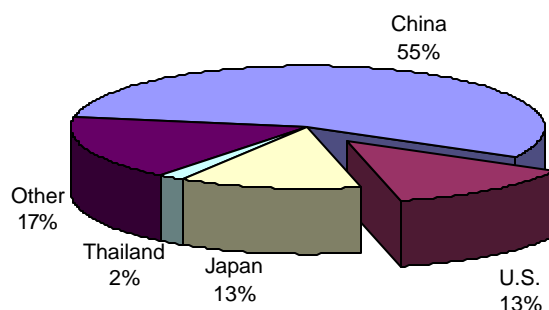
#### a. Sauces

The sauce market includes soy sauce, ketchup, prepared mustard, mayonnaise, BBQ sauce, hot sauces, fish sauce, salad dressings, steak sauce, and Worcestershire sauce.

In 2004, Korea imported \$8.5 million of sauces from the United States. This value has continued to increase over the last five years and is estimated to be \$9.5 million in 2005. The Korean consumers' desire to purchase new, diverse products has been a major contributor to this increase.

China and Japan are the major competitors for the United States. Their ability to produce products that are cheaper and more similar to the flavor Korean consumers enjoy has allowed them to gain a competitive advantage over the U.S. Korean consumers are following the trend of purchasing sauces with unique flavors.

**Table 5. 2004 Market Share for Imported Sauces**



The importation of soy sauce from the United States, although showing signs of growth, still remains a meager amount compared to that of Japan. Korean consumers are leaning toward the varieties of flavored soy sauce that Japan produces. This has caused the market potential for the United States to remain lower, as many U.S. exporters do not explore this avenue of different flavored soy sauce.

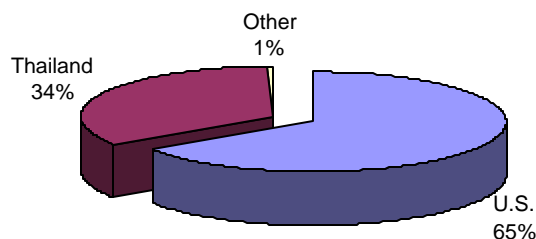
**Table 6. Imports of Soy Sauce (HS 2103.10.0000)**  
**Unit: Value US \$1000**

Country	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005 <sup>1</sup>	2004 Market Share
Japan	1325	1235	1581	1992	2032	2116	75%
U.S.	164	147	124	152	195	206	7%
Total	1622	1497	1849	2355	2714	3960	100%

Note: 1. 2005 is an estimate.

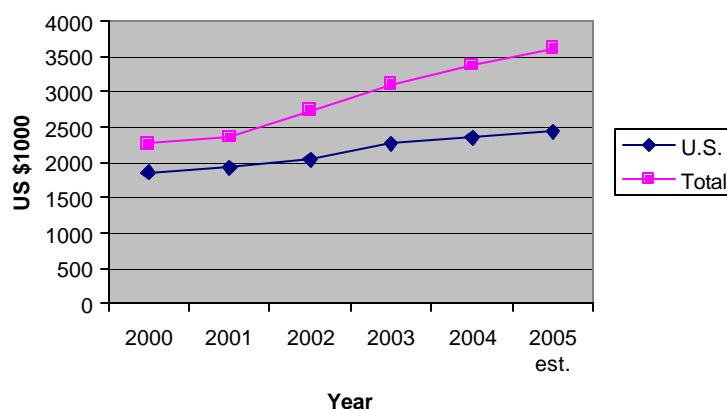
The imported tomato ketchup market in Korea is dominated by the United States and Thailand. In 2004, the U.S. exported \$483 thousand to Korea while Thailand exported \$248 thousand. It is estimated that 2005 imports from the United States will be \$394 thousand and imports from Thailand will be \$286 thousand. This shows an 18 percent decrease for the U.S. and a 13 percent increase for Thailand. The cause of this is most likely the availability of cheaper Thai products.

**Table 7. 2004 Market Share for Imported Ketchup (HS 2103.20.1000)**



The prepared mustard market in Korea is largely dominated by the United States with 70 percent of the market share in 2004. Over the past five years, there has been a steady increase in the growth of prepared mustard exports from the U.S. It is estimated in 2005 to be an increase of 3.4 percent. This is due in large part to the variety of prepared mustards that are being imported by Korea. Korean consumers are looking for a diverse selection of mustards to choose from.

**Table 8. Imports of Prepared Mustard  
(HS 2103.30.2000)**



The Korean importation of mayonnaise has been on an up and down trend for the past few years. The reasoning behind this is the taste of the Korean consumer. With a product more similar to that of Korean local flavors, some mayonnaise products are increasing their market potential. Japan is the largest competitor for American mayonnaise. They have captured market share by changing the flavor of their product to reflect consumer demand. It is estimated that in 2005, however, the U.S. will increase its market share and capture 31 percent. This is a result of American manufacturers adjusting their product for this market.

**Table 9. Imports of Mayonnaise (HS 2103.90.9010)  
Unit: Value US \$1000**

Country	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005 <sup>1</sup>	2004 Market Share
Japan	37	24	4	12	360	230	86%
U.S.	12	27	42	35	36	100	9%
Total	51	51	46	49	418	326	100%

Note: 1. 2005 is an estimate.

The imports of other sauces and preparations, such as BBQ sauce, hot sauces, fish sauce, salad dressings, steak sauce, and Worcestershire sauce are on the rise.

Salad dressings are new to Koreans. Traditionally, Koreans consume kimchi, a salt-preserved spicy cabbage and not fresh greens such as what Americans call salads. Consumer tastes are changing; the most popular salad dressings are italian or mayonnaise-based dressings such as ranch. Oil and vinegar dressings have become more popular recently because of the "well being" trend. The diversity of products available is growing rapidly and the market is changing at a very fast pace. Presently, only a few varieties of imported dressings are available in the market because of food additive restrictions.

Sauces such as BBQ, hot sauce, fish sauce, steak sauce, and Worcestershire sauce are continually increasing as well. Koreans are looking for new flavors of sauces to add to their traditional palate. Many of these sauces compliment local flavors.

**Table 10. Imports of Other Sauces and Preparations (HS 2103.90.9090)**  
**Unit: Value US \$1000**

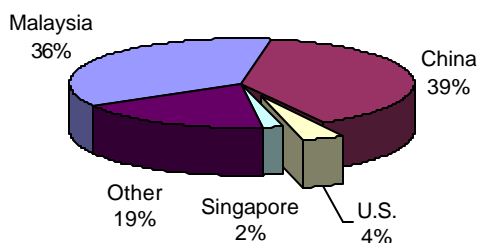
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005 <sup>1</sup>	2004 Market Share
China	16,443	21,172	24,691	32,019	35,029	42,382	62%
U.S.	4586	5085	5225	5270	5441	6352	9%
Japan	3359	2959	3540	4615	5258	5398	9%
Total	29,664	35,111	39,050	46,719	56,404	64,002	100%

Note: 1. 2005 is an estimate.

b. Salt and Pepper

The salt and pepper market in Korea is a small one for the United States. In 2004, the United States exported \$427 thousand to Korea, a drop of \$320 thousand from the previous year. A large factor in this decrease is the comparative advantage that China and Malaysia have in the pricing of their salt and pepper exports. Malaysia has continued to increase their market share on a steady basis. In 2005, it is estimated that the United States, through efforts to increase the quality of product, will gain a little of the market share back and imports by Korea will increase to \$529 thousand.

**Table 11. 2004 Market Share for Imported Salt and Pepper**



In 2004, there was a 41 percent increase in the importation of salt by Korea because of a drop in domestic salt production, as it was determined that local production could not meet the demand. China dominated this increase with their market value increasing 43 percent from the previous year. Imports from China were valued at \$4.3 million in 2004, while the United States imported \$62 thousand. In 2005, it is estimated that China will continue to further the gap with a 31 percent increase and a value of \$6.2 million while the United States increases their market value by 33 percent to \$93 thousand.

The crushed/ground black pepper market is steadily growing. The United States has two competitors for this market in Korea: Malaysia and Singapore. In 2004, the U.S. experienced a decrease in its market share of 46 percent to a value of \$333 thousand, but it is estimated that in 2005 it will increase 24 percent to a value of \$436 thousand and regain a larger portion of the market. The market share decrease was a direct result of U.S. crushed/ground black pepper price being higher than that of other imported countries. In 2005, it is estimated that the United States will provide a more price competitive product. While in 2004 Malaysia and Singapore maintained 30 percent and 14 percent of the market share respectively, it is estimated that in 2005 the market share for Malaysia will decrease to



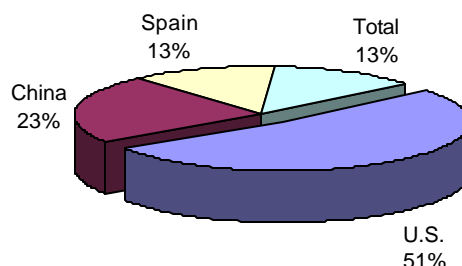
12 percent and Singapore's market share will increase to 18 percent. Quality of crushed/ground black pepper is the determining factor in this shift of market share.

The market for whole black pepper is dominated by Malaysia, as Koreans perceive the quality to be higher. In 2004, imports from the United States represented 1 percent of the market with a value of \$32 thousand, while those from Malaysia represented 68 percent and a value of \$3.7 million. It is estimated that in 2005 the market share gap will remain consistent with U.S. imports valued at \$22 thousand and Malaysia imports valued at \$4.2 million.

#### c. Pickles and Olives

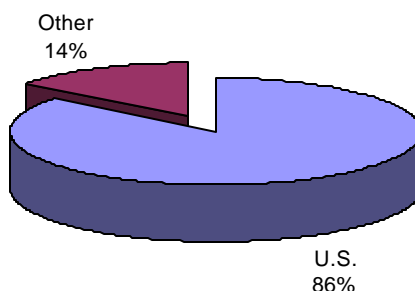
The Korean market for pickles and olives remained relatively steady over the past five years. In 2004, the total market in Korea was \$11 million, while it is estimated to drop to \$10.7 million in 2005. Imports from the United States have been on a downward slope over the past five years, and it is estimated that this will continue. These decreases are due to a number of factors, of which the largest are changes in consumer taste preferences and an increasing number of imported products being finished and packaged locally. With a higher standard of living being adopted among Koreans, consumers are looking for a pickle that has a different, more distinct flavor than the typical sweet pickle of the past.

**Table 12. 2004 Market Share for Imported Pickles and Olives**



Many Korean consumers are looking for pickle products with new flavors. Pickles with dill, sour, and hot flavors are becoming increasingly popular. Prepared products that are a mixture of vegetables, such as cucumber, pepper, tomato and onion, are also appealing to the Korean consumer market.

**Table 13. 2004 Market Share for Imported Pickles  
(Cucumber/Gherkins) and Relish (HS2001.10.0000)**



The pickle market is separated into two categories of pickles. There are cucumber/gherkin pickles and relish in one category and hot chili pepper and jalapeno pepper in the other.

In 2004, Korea imported \$4.7 million of its total \$5.4 million cucumber/gherkin imports from the United States. It is estimated that total imports of cucumbers/gherkins are only expected to be \$4.8 million in 2005. The market for these types of pickles is expected to continue to decrease as Koreans are looking for products that are less sweet. In addition, imports of prepared cucumbers are increasing. Korean importers are buying these cucumbers in brine and finishing the product locally. This allows the consumers to get a product with a unique local flavor.

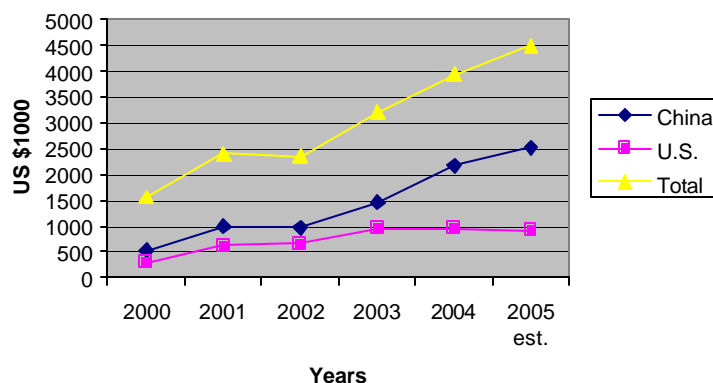
**Table 14. Imports of Pickles (Cucumbers/Gherkins) & Relish  
(HS 2001.10.0000)  
Unit: Value US \$1000**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005 <sup>1</sup>	2004 Market Share
U.S.	6803	6145	5671	4931	4701	4235	86%
Total	6980	6437	5990	5616	5491	4846	100%

Note: 1. 2005 is an estimate.

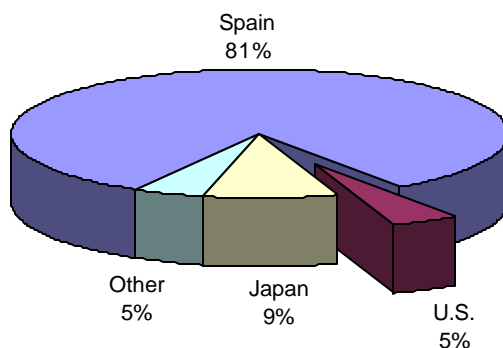
On the other hand, the hot chili pepper and jalapeno pepper pickle market is on an upward trend. Last year, Korean total imports were \$3.9 million. The U.S. held a market share of 24 percent. In 2005, it is estimated that the United States will have a market share of 20 percent. This decrease is the result of China's ability to produce a cheaper product with a greater number of flavor varieties.

**Table 15. Imports of Pickles (Hot Chili Pepper and Jalapeno Pepper)  
(HS 2001.90.9090)**



The olive market in Korea is primarily dominated by Spain controlling 81 percent of the market in 2004 with a value of \$1.3 million. In 2004, the United States had a market share of 5 percent with a value of \$73 thousand. It is estimated in 2005 that the total market will decrease by \$261 thousand, however the market shares of both Spain and the U.S. will remain constant. This decrease of 16 percent is caused by a high retail price and the availability of many other similar preserved products on the market.

**Table 16. 2004 Market Share for Imported Preserved Olives  
(HS 2005.70.0000)**

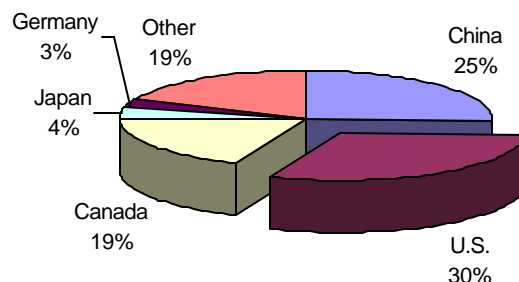


#### d. Syrups and Honey

United States imports of syrup and honey to Korea has increased over the past five years. In 2004, Korea imported \$1 million from the U.S., 31 percent of the market. The major competitors to the United States are China and Canada. In 2004, Chinese imports were valued at \$870 thousand, while those from Canada had a value of \$636 thousand. In 2005, it is estimated that both the United States and Canada will lose market share to China. Imports of syrup and honey from China are estimated to be \$1.7 million, while imports from the U.S. imports are estimated at \$680 thousand, and imports from Canada are estimated at

\$453 thousand. This will result in a market share loss of 11 percent for the United States and a market share loss of 5 percent for Canada. China is becoming increasingly competitive in the syrup and honey market because of their ability to produce cheaper products of a similar quality to that of the United States.

**Table 17. 2004 Market Share for Imported Syrups and Honey**



Although the United States is not a major competitor in the caramel syrup market as China and Japan together represented 73 percent of the total market in 2004, the market is growing for the United States. 2004 Korean imports from the U.S. increased 18 percent and it is estimated that they will increase another 47 percent in 2005. The 2005 estimations show only an 8 percent growth for China and a decline for Japan. The ability of the U.S. to produce a price competitive product is likely to be the reason for China's gain in market share.

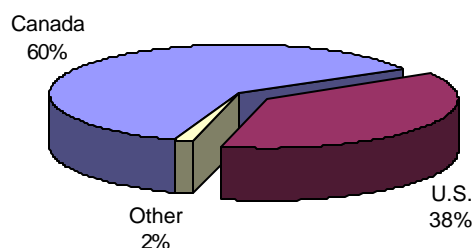
**Table 18. Imports of Syrup – Caramel (HS 1702.90.2000)**  
Unit: Value US \$1000

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005 <sup>1</sup>	2004 Market Share
China	357	390	429	309	266	289	50%
Japan	242	186	67	168	123	103	23%
U.S.	63	13	55	40	49	92	9%
Germany	0	0	0	17	89	39	17%
Total	694	630	626	574	535	532	100%

Note: 1. 2005 is an estimate.

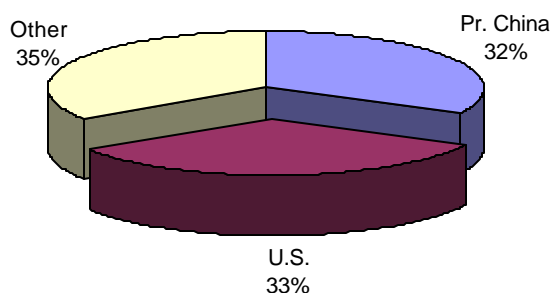
In 2004, Korea imported a total of \$1 million of maple syrup from the world. Of that, imports from the U.S. were valued at \$384 thousand, a 59 percent increase from the previous year. The largest competitor for the U.S. is Canada, and 2004 imports were valued at \$622 thousand, an increase of 36 percent from the previous year. The trend of "well-being" and healthy eating is a major cause of this market shift. As Koreans are eating foods that are less sweet, they will continue to veer away from these sweet products.

**Table 19. 2004 Market Share for Imported Maple Syrup  
(HS 1702.20.2000)**



Imports of natural honey to Korea come mostly from China and the United States. In 2004, U.S. imports were valued at \$620 thousand, an increase of 44 percent from the previous year, while imports from China were valued at \$604 thousand, an increase of 37 percent from the previous year. In 2005, it is estimated that the market shares of both China and the United States will remain relatively constant to that of 2004. It is also estimated that in 2005 the U.S. will increase its market value to \$653 thousand and China will increase its market value to \$632 thousand. The use of honey in Korea as a natural flavoring to foods has increased the market demand.

**Table 20. 2004 Market Share for Imported Natural Honey  
(HS 0409.00.0000)**



**SECTION III. COSTS AND PRICES**

## 1. Tariffs and Taxes

**Table 21. Tariffs for Condiments and Salad Dressings**

HS Code	Condiment/Salad Dressing Description	Tariff
0409.00.0000	Natural Honey	20%
0904.11.0000	Black Pepper – Whole	8%
0904.12.0000	Black Pepper – Ground/Crushed	8%
1702.20.2000	Syrup – Maple	8%
1702.90.2000	Syrup – Caramel	8%
2001.10.0000	Pickles (Cucumber/Gherkins), Relish	30%
2001.90.9090	Pickles (Hot Chili Peppers/Jalapeno Peppers)	30%
2005.70.0000	Prepared or Preserved Olives	20%
2103.10.0000	Soy Sauce	8%
2103.20.1000	Ketchup	8%
2103.30.2000	Prepared Mustard	8%
2103.90.9010	Mayonnaise	8%
2103.90.9090	BBQ Sauce, Hot Sauces, Fish Sauce, Salad Dressings, Steak Sauce, Worcestershire Sauce	8% <sup>1</sup>
2501.00.9010	Edible Salt	8%

<sup>1</sup> Hot Sauces: tariff rate is 8 percent when product contains less than 20 percent pepper ingredient. Tariff rate is 45 percent when product contains more than 20 percent pepper ingredient.

Source: Tariff Schedules of Korea 2005 by Korea Customs & Trade Institute

A Value Added Tax (VAT) is charged on all imported goods and the current rate is 10 percent of the dutiable value. Dutiable value is CIF value (Customs value) plus all the other duties and taxes (Customs duty, Special Excise tax, Liquor Tax, Transportation tax, Tobacco tax, Education tax and etc).

## 2. Costs in Securing Retail Store Shelf Space

The amount of slotting fee that a retail store would charge for a new product varies depending on the marketing potential of the product. Local retail stores are eager to add new products to their shelves as they strive to meet the consumers' demand for new tastes, but at the same time are very concerned about carrying something new to the market. That is why local retailers often ask for promotional support instead of slotting fees for new products. Promotional support includes in-store advertisement, in-store free sampling, and other point of purchase sales promotions such as sweepstakes, coupons, and games. Free sampling is the most common promotion used, as it costs less and is easier to administer. In-store promotions are highly recommended for launching new products since consumers make buying decisions based on in-store education and experience.

## 3. Prices and Markups

The following table details retail prices for the major imported condiments and salad dressings. These prices were obtained from local Korean supermarkets.

**Table 22. Retail Prices of Condiments and Salad Dressings**

<b>Condiments &amp; Salad Dressings</b>	<b>Price – Korean Won</b>	<b>Weight ml/g</b>
BBQ Sauce	2500-3200	250
Black Pepper – Ground/Crushed	1320-2040	50-65
Black Pepper – Whole	20,000	250
Edible Salt	4400	200
Fish Sauce	2000-3700	255
Hot Sauce	4580	150
Ketchup	1680-2280	740
Mayonnaise	2400-2800	500
Natural Honey	7200-9500	500
Pickles (Cucumber/Gherkins)	3800-9950	710
Pickles (Hot Chili Pepper/Jalapeno Pepper)	3600-4300	473
Prepared Mustard	1550	330
Prepared or Preserved Olives – Green	1600	300
Black	1650	385
Relish	2500	375
Salad Dressings – Vinaigrette	9500	237
Salad Dressings – Thousand Island	9800	236
Salad Dressings – Italian	4450	300
Salad Dressings – French	9000	300
Soy Sauce	3220-6000	1000
Steak Sauce	2500-3200	250
Syrup – Caramel	9900	250
Syrup – Maple	8350	250
Worcestershire Sauce	2800	355

Source: ATO Seoul Department Store/Hypermarket Survey

#### **SECTION IV. MARKET ACCESS**

There are many food standards and regulations. This section describes only the basic guidelines of Korean import requirements. For details on Korean import regulation, see the Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (FAIRS) Reports (KS5037), dated July 31, 2005, available on the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) website at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/scripts/attacherep/default.asp>

##### **Food additive restrictions:**

U.S. exporters should be aware that there are some restrictions on food additives in products imported to Korea. These restrictions should be researched thoroughly, as they can prevent products from being allowed for Korean consumption.

The "Food Additive Code," monitored by the Korea Food and Drug Administration, guides the use of all additives in foods in Korea. As of July 2004, Korea had a positive list of 615 approved food additives. Food additives are grouped into three categories: (a) chemical synthetics, (b) natural additives, and (c) mixture substances.

Most additives and/or preservatives are approved and tolerance levels are established on a product-by-product basis in Korea. This creates difficulties as tolerances can vary from

product to product. Getting a new additive added to the approved list can be time consuming and troublesome. Even though there may be an established CODEX standard for a given food additive, if that food additive is not registered in the Korean Food Additive Code, or even if registered but usage in a certain food product is not specified, use of that food additive in the given food product is prohibited. This means that only food additives registered in the Korean Food Additive Code are allowed for use in food products, in accordance with the usage standards specified in the Food Additive Code.

The office responsible for approving food additives in KFDA is as follows:

**Food Additives Evaluation Department**

Korea Food & Drug Administration  
# 5 Nokbeon-dong, Eunpyung-ku  
Seoul, Korea 122-704  
Phone: 82-2-380-1687; Fax: 82-2-382-4892

**Label requirements:**

Imported condiments are required by law to have a Korean language label. Korean language stickers may be applied in lieu of a Korean language label. The sticker should not be easily removable and shouldn't cover the original labeling. Labels should have the following inscriptions printed in letters large enough to be readily legible:

- (1) Product name. The product name should be identical to the product name declared to the licensing/inspection authority.
- (2) Product type. This is mandatory for specially designated products, such as teas, health supplements, etc.
- (3) Importer's name and address, and the address where products may be returned or exchanged in the event of defects.
- (4) Manufacture date (month and year). This is mandatory for specially designated products, such as lunch boxes, sugar, liquor, and salt. For liquors, a manufacture number (lot number) or bottling date can substitute for the manufacture date.
- (5) Shelf life. Food product labels should indicate the manufacturer-determined shelf life. If various kinds of products are packaged together, the shelf life expiration date of the product with the shortest life should be noted on the label.
- (6) Contents. Weight, volume or number of pieces should be indicated. If the number of pieces is shown, the weight or volume must be indicated in parentheses.
- (7) Ingredient names and content. Effective September 7, 2006, the names of all ingredients must be included on food labels. Artificially added purified water and certain other ingredients, amounting to less than five percent of the ingredients, will be excluded from the requirement. Ingredient names should be listed in order of predominance by weight; that is, the ingredient that weighs the most is listed first, and the ingredient that weighs the least is listed last. Food additives must also be listed on the label by full name, abbreviated name, or purpose (e.g. Ferric Citrate, FECitrate, or nutrient fortified substance). Food items known to be food allergens must be indicated on the label even if they are added as part of a mix at minimal levels. Food items considered as food allergens include eggs, milk, buckwheat, peanuts, soybeans, wheat, mackerel, crab, pork, peaches and tomatoes. Any food product containing one or more of the 11 items listed above as a raw ingredient(s) must indicate so in Korean on the label.



(8) Nutrients. Only special nutritional foods, health supplements, bread, noodles (cooked noodles, fried noodles, gelatinized dry noodles, and improved cooked noodles), retort foods, products for which nutritional labels are sought, and products for which a nutrient emphasis mark is desired are currently subject to nutritional labeling. However, in accordance with the March 2005 revision, nutritional labeling requirements will be expanded to foods that children frequently consume beginning in September 2006.

(9) Other items designated by the detailed labeling standards for food. This includes cautions and standards for use or preservation (e.g., drained weight for canned products, radiation-processed products, etc.). The revision, dated July 2000, introduced the principal display panel-labeling requirement, the labeling criteria for organic products, etc., and removed the food category-labeling requirement for the majority of food products. The principal display panel must contain the product name, product type, and content information. If this is not feasible, such information must be provided on a Korean language sticker using a 12-point or larger font size.

Labeling standards, food codes, and import requirements can change frequently in Korea. Your Korean importer will be the best resource for current information on these requirements.

## **SECTION V. KEY CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION**

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